

Memorandum

To: Robert R. Treanor
Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

Date: May 13, 2005

From: **L. RYAN BRODDRICK, Director**
Department of Fish and Game

Subject: Submission of Draft Master Plan Framework for the Implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act

Attached is the Draft Master Plan Framework for the Implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA). This document provides guidelines for the discussion of improving California's existing array of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in various regions of the State. The Department is confident this document will provide a good basis for implementing the MLPA. However, the Department remains concerned about the lack of adequate funding and staff for monitoring, management, and enforcement efforts in new MPAs. Funding, staffing and other implementation issues must be seriously considered during the planning process. The Department recognizes the considerable challenge in adhering to the regional stakeholder groups' proposed schedule to fully complete the process identified in this framework, but will make every effort to do so.

The MLPA requires that the Department develop a full master plan and that the Commission adopt a plan and implement a program based on the plan. The Master Plan Framework is the first step in meeting these requirements. The document is intended to facilitate the implementation of the MLPA in phases throughout the State. The first phase will be within the central coast study region, which extends from Pigeon Point to Point Conception. A proposal for this region is scheduled to be brought to you in March 2006. The Department will be evaluating the feasibility of this target date throughout the process. Subsequent phases will continue through 2011, when a full master plan and complete program will be implemented. Implementation of the central coast plan and subsequent phases will require significant additional funding and staff support, which must be fully available by December 2006 or when implementation is scheduled.

The Master Plan Framework was drafted under the guidance of the MLPA Initiative Blue Ribbon Task Force. The Task Force held several public meetings to gather information and receive comments on previous drafts of the document. The Task Force provided its recommended draft to the Department on April 18, 2005. The Department has reviewed the Task Force draft and is providing you with this revised draft including the following significant changes:

- Addition of a comprehensive table of contents;
- Additional detail on the extent of the Cowcod Conservation Areas and Rockfish Conservation Areas;

- Addition of a feasibility analysis to the steps required to develop MPA proposals. The Department feels this analysis is critical to ensure that proposals forwarded to the Commission are realistically implementable;
- Addition of criteria for the design of MPAs from the Draft Abalone Recovery and Management Plan have been added to the section describing other management plans;
- Addition of a flowchart describing the relationship between MPAs and other management efforts and whether individual, regional, and statewide goals are being achieved;
- Addition of a flowchart describing the steps necessary to develop monitoring plans;
- Emphasis on the need for additional enforcement support; and
- Addition of details on life history characteristics of the list of species likely to benefit from MPAs to the appendix.

Further editorial changes and corrections were made to the Task Force draft. The Department looks forward to the Commission's review of this draft and, directs the Commission's specific attention to the following areas:

- The Task Force has recommended, and the Department agrees, that a specific set of activities should take place when discussing MPAs in various regions. The Department has added a feasibility analysis to these steps as described above. The Commission may wish to revise or add to these steps.
- The Task Force has recommended, and the Department agrees, that two biogeographical regions be used for the purpose of implementing the MLPA. This differs from the three regions originally conceived of in the MLPA.
- The Task Force has recommended, and the Department agrees, that additional habitats from those specifically listed in the MLPA should be considered when designing MPAs.
- The boundaries of regional processes to occur following the completion of the central coast study region may be further defined by the Commission. The Department can provide a recommendation on this at the Commission's direction.

Robert R. Treanor

May 13, 2005

Page 3

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. John Ugoretz, Nearshore Ecosystem Coordinator and Central Manager of the Department's Marine Region, by telephone at (831) 649-2893 or by email at jugoretz@dfg.ca.gov.

Attachment(s)

cc: Sonke Mastrup, Deputy Director